

The Builder.

No. XCVI.

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 1844.



FEW cities, ancient or modern, contain more architectural beauties than London, and perhaps none.

The various objects of interest which it contains are too numerous to particularize; externally they unite to render it one of the most picturesque places in the universe. It is true that artists by profession have uniformly little favoured it with their attention, and comparatively few architectural repre-

sentations of its ancient glories have been produced. There have from time to time issued an abundance of coarse prints of buildings in it, and of the whole city, but that kind of artistic talent, whether of Englishmen or foreigners, which has illustrated most of the continental cities, has been lacking towards our own ancient metropolis. Everywhere, as the eye turns, some new view is presented, with an increased interest and picturesqueness. If in the city of London there be a narrow lane, some fine church campanile is seen terminating it, or perhaps a group of steeples of the most elegant outline; and such scenes as these are countless. If you enter the great court of St. Bartholomew's Hospital, West Smithfield, the most singularly rich and beautifully picturesque group of towers and steeples, accompanied by the dome and turrets of St. Paul's Cathedral, is seen through the narrow interval between two of the masses of building surrounding the court. If you go into Aldersgate-street, one of the most enchanting scenes in the world is presented in a view over the cemetery of St. Botolph's Church, in which the bell-tower of St. Sepulchre's Church, Snow-hill, with its four high crowning spires, and the numerous changeable gables and turrets of Christ's Hospital, and many other objects of interest present themselves, while in the foreground lies the new French Church, and at greater distance rises like an Alpine back-scenery almost the whole length and altitude of the huge and richly-decorated cathedral. If you go to the bridges over the Thames, more comprehensive and more varied views are in succession seen, perhaps each unrivalled in the world, and each greatly differing from the other.

Whether beheld from the interior of the city itself or from the Surrey hills, from the water, from the parks, from the country road, or from the close by-lane, the same evidences are shed abroad of changeable variety, architectural beauty, and the outlay of vast wealth, in the accumulation of such an amount of value.

Among some of the most interesting objects within the city itself, we may reckon the city companies' halls, most of which, though built

after the great fire of London in 1666, bear considerable marks of antiquity. Mercers' Hall has next the Poultry a front which is profuse in stone carvings, while the interior of the hall itself contains some of the most exquisite wood carvings in the world, jetting forth with more than the imagery of life. The costly Goldsmiths' new Hall is increased in value by a chimney-piece of marble which came from the former hall, and which is so wonderfully wrought over with fruit, flowers, butterflies, and other lively imagery, and with so masterly a hand, that we were told, when in the old hall it was valued at a thousand guineas.

The entrances to most of the ancient city halls present some architectural peculiarities; many of them are heavy in style, are incorrectly designed, and are of coarse execution; yet they exhibit magnificence, often rich though somewhat rude sculpture, and are the very subjects for displaying the effect of the painter, who generally fails when he attempts to imitate the classical and elaborate exactness of perfect specimens of architecture. Among such examples, are the street and court portals of the Haberdashers' hall, in Maiden-lane, of Barber Surgeons' hall, Monkwell-street, of Merchant Tailors' Hall in Throgmorton-street (which has lately received the addition of a duplicate copy of it in the same street), also of the Brewers' Hall, and the hall of the Tallow-chandlers; and many more lying in the neighbourhood of Thames-street, and other close and dirty parts of the city, are each possessed of some one beauty at least, whatever defects they may contain. Nearly all these fraternity halls are replete internally with sculptured oak, oil paintings, stained-glass, cote-armoury, fine ancient furniture, and collections of plate (some gilt, and some wholly of gold). Many of these old examples of architecture contain curious specimens of red brickwork, generally "ganged," and often a mixture of stone naturally light, or painted to appear so, and which, contrasting violently with the deep-coloured brick rendered half black through age and soot, gives to the whole a singularly motley appearance. Most of these halls consist of buildings surrounding a court-yard, some few of which still, after "improvement," remain paved with marble, and, if we mistake not, one or two, if not more, exhibit the pride of a fountain, and many of them still retain their ancient cisterns of thick, solid lead, cast all over with strange devices, and the arms of the company and donors, and still firm and sound, having been made when lead, weight sixteen pounds to the foot superficial, was laid upon churches, and thought to be none too thick or heavy; around these courts ranges many a column and pilaster, and is seen many a quaint device, sculptured with less of cunning than of drollery; and in some, as at Brewers' Hall, within the courtyard rises a mighty external staircase, leading to the principal apartment (properly termed the hall), on the one-pair story. The oaken doors of many of these halls are very curiously designed and carved, and, though still sound, have survived two or three generations of doors to the neighbouring houses.

If you want fine and interesting views, and so original that the world at large knows almost nothing of them, you must come into the heart of London, where the rough carman daily almost brushes them in passing, without noticing whether they have beauty or deformity, sculpture or plainness. About Tower Royal, in the neighbourhood of Watling-street, carved, quaint, and original doorways, whether to public or private edifices, meet you at every step.

At Saint John's Church, Clerkenwell, and St. John's Chapel, Bedford-row, there are examples worthy of appreciation. In Queen's-square, Westminster, are still remaining many of the original doorways, with carved open-work canopies stretching forward like bed-testers. In Bloomsbury-square, Great Ormond-street, and the neighbouring places, are many fine examples still in existence, each of which would furnish an excellent subject for a beautiful drawing. In Carey-street are several very peculiar specimens, one of which, near the entrance to New Bowell-court, contains parts of remarkable beauty, and there is one in Old Bowell-court itself which has a curious piece of scroll-work, and a head in a compartment below the centre of the architrave which seems to be looped up for their reception. Opposite the House of Correction, Goldsmiths' fields, there was once a whole row of doorways with fine consoles, with flowers running down their fronts. Many of these are gone, though originally some of these examples extended down the neighbouring streets. In a narrow avenue leading from the western end of Great Marlborough-street, are two very quaint specimens, with fine consoles. At the comparatively modern doorway of St. Helen's Church, Bishopsgate, remains a pair of consoles, with trumping angels, projecting in a very singular way. In Rufford's-row, by Islington Church, are some doorways with consoles something like them, but less valuable and not so well executed. In Red Lion-street, Clerkenwell, and in Featherstone-buildings, Holborn, are examples exactly like them, these two places being probably built by the same person, as in each are the two same patterns of doorways many times repeated.

(To be continued.)

ELECTION OF SURVEYORS TO THE FOUR NEW DISTRICTS IN THE COUNTY OF SURREY.

(December 2nd, 1844.)

FOR CAMBERWELL.

	No. of Votes.
Elected—William Crawford Stow	48

FOR STREATHAM.

Elected—John Mullins	25
Edwin Nash	22
Charles Baillam	1

FOR CLAPHAM AND PART OF BATTERSEA.

Elected—Edward l'Anson	48
William Watson—Retired.	

FOR WANDSWORTH AND TOTTING.

Elected—Alfred James Hiscocks	32
George Enoch	10
John Turner	5
Alfred Beaumont	1

The surveyorship of the district consisting of Rotherhithe (vacant by the election of Mr. Stow to the Camberwell new district) and of the Surrey portion of St. Paul, Deptford, will be filled up on the 16th instant.

In our account last week of the "Election of District-Surveyors for the County of Middlesex," we inadvertently gave Mr. James Harrison's number of votes as 38 instead of 39.

BUILDING SOCIETIES.

LETTER II.

BY WILLOUGHBY WILTON.

The Metropolitan Equitable Investment Association and Savings Fund; for enabling members to purchase residences for occupation, or other freehold or leasehold property for investment, by monthly subscriptions of 10s. per share.—Office, 28, Leadenhall-street, London.

"ALL persons upon joining this association are required to pay an entrance fee of 2s. 6d. per share, a monthly subscription of 10s. per share, and a postage fee of 1s. per annum to the general fund, until such subscriptions, with the profits, amount to 120l. per share, when the association will be dissolved: from the